

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ROME 00420 091930Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
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S E C R E T ROME 0420

EXDIS

DEPT. FOR EUR/WE AND EUR/RPM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, NATO, IT
SUBJECT: REPLACEMENT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL PANSA

REF: USNATO 132

1. WE ENDORSE OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED PARA 14 REFTTEL. THE
NOMINATION OF PETRIGNANI, ALL OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL, IS
A GOOD ONE. WE AGREE ENTIRELY THAT BOTH LUNS AND CATALANO
SHOULD BE INFORMED THAT THE MANNER IN WHICH THE NOMINATION
CAME ABOUT DOES NOT CONTRIBUTE TO ALLIED HARMONY. WE AGREE,
TOO, THAT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE THE US SHOULD NOT DIS-
COURAGE THE SUBMISSION OF OTHER CANDIDATES.

2. ALTHOUGH WE RECOGNIZE THAT "ALL OTHER THINGS" ARE NOT
EQUAL, WE BELIEVE THAT THE ITALIAN CANDIDATURE OUGHT NOT
AT THIS CRITICAL JUNCTURE BECOME AN ISSUE RELATED TO THE
EVOLUTION OF INTERNAL ITALIAN AFFAIRS. ALTHOUGH CATALANO'S
ASSESSMENT OF "SERIOUS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES
DOMESTICALLY IN ITALY" IS OVERDRAWN, IT IS
ESSENTIALLY VALID. A MOVE TO BLOCK THE ITALIA

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CANDIDATE WOULD BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. SUCH A MOVE
WOULD GENERALLY BE SEEN AS ANTICIPATING A MORE FORMAL
PCI ROLE IN THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY, AND AS THE
BEGINNING OF A PROCESS OF ALLIED ISOLATION OF ITS
ITALIAN PARTNER. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT PERCEPTION
WOULD SERVE OUR, OR NATO, INTERESTS AT THIS TIME.

3. THUS, FOR THE MOMENT, WE WOULD SUGGEST LETTING THE CANADIANS PLAY OUT THEIR INITIATIVE WITHOUT TAKING THE LEAD TO CONFIRM PETRIGNANI'S CANDIDACY, ALTHOUGH IF A GENERAL CONSENSUS FOR CONFIRMATION DEVELOPS WE WOULD SUGGEST JOINING IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE ISSUE IS STILL ALIVE WHEN THE ITALIANS SETTLE THEIR CURRENT POLITICAL CRISIS (WHICH MAY TAKE A MONTH OR MORE), WE MAY WISH TO RECONSIDER THE MATTER IN LIGHT OF THE KIND OF POLITICAL SOLUTION THAT IS WORKED OUT IN ROME. GARDNER

SECRET

NNN

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